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DYSTOPIA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY**

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## ABSTRACT

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The thesis deals with two essential dystopian works of the 20th century English literature and the historical background of the period when they were written: George Orwell's *Nineteen-Eighty Four* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. The intention was to examine the events happening in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s that could have possibly influenced both authors' thoughts, and analyse the novels' main issues. Both books were considered discrete units and each matched to particular historical facts. It was ascertained that the authors derived many of their ideas from real situations. The authors developed the stories based on different impetus but both of them indicated future of the man.

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## INTRODUCTION

For my thesis I have chosen the topic of dystopian literature. There have been many novels written on this subject but I chose only two of them for closer examination, George Orwell's *Nineteen-Eighty Four* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Aldous Huxley wrote his novel as a reaction to what he considered retrograde changes in morality. He was concerned about the technological development in connection with moral changes that happened during his life and based on those feelings he created a fictitious world where pleasure is the goal of every day life, and a human being is no more than a consumer without individual value. The society Huxley created wants to be primarily stable and it conditions its citizens in order to maintain stability. It abolished sadness and monogamous partner life together with families. Huxley uses his knowledge of biology to predict how babies could be produced without the need of women's bodies and their care, and places the beginning of one's life into a factory. Huxley's new world order might be by some viewed as an ideal one for the very reason of leading a life with no difficulties, no stress, a suitable working place and the freedom to change sexual partners. Many though consider it depressing as no deviation from the set behaviour is possible. However, Huxley leaves such a reader hope, showing that there are places in the world where the disorderly people get to live instead of disturbing the stability of this society.

On the other hand, George Orwell does not provide any hope for change what-so-ever: his arrangement is meant to be eternal, that is the most horrible idea ever. His book is a pessimistic vision of the future, though some say this was hugely affected by his illness at the end of his life and he had no personal hope to reflect in the novel. The world depicted by him does not pretend that it satisfies anybody: the goal is the very opposite. Living conditions are horrible, it is difficult or impossible to satisfy the basic needs, the life of an individual is based on fear, hiding and hatred. The society is authoritarian and the Inner Party members are

in charge through the person of Big Brother. The controlled group of people are the Outer Party members and there is one more group of inhabitants left alone but in poverty and those are the proles, people who build 80 per cent of all the country's inhabitants but who are uninterested in political happening. George Orwell drew his ideas mainly from the current situation in the Soviet Union and added more negative thoughts to ascertain the impression of even greater suffering.

The thesis is going to define the terms utopia, dystopia and anti-utopia. After that it is going to introduce the period of the 1920s in Europe and America, 1930s and 1940s in Russia and some other places. It is going to proceed to the analysis of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and finish up with George Orwell's *Nineteen-Eighty Four*.

## 1. Chapter One: General Framework

The first chapter of the thesis intends to set the background for two dystopian novels dealt with in the second and third chapters. It is going to discuss the term dystopia, consequently utopia and anti-utopia and mention the most important historical events that probably led both authors to see the future the way they did. The aim is to find such historical development that showed in one way or another in the books.

### 1.1 Utopia and dystopia

The terms utopia and dystopia are the cornerstones for the chosen works of authors Aldous Huxley and George Orwell. In fact dystopia is, but utopia is not going to be missed out as these terms are closely connected and sometimes they overlap. In order to understand what dystopia is, it is necessary to be familiar with the word utopia.

Utopia according to Thrall and Hibbard is “a word meaning ‘nowhere’ coined by Thomas More to represent the seat of his ideal republic as pictured in his *Utopia* (1516). The idea of presenting plans for ideal commonwealths has interested many philosophers and writers...” (502). In *Utopia*, the character of Raphael Hythloday talks to Peter Giles and More and narrates about a place he visited called Utopia, about its policy, life and rules and considers it the best of all societies he knows. In the book, More in the end says:

...many things occurred to me, both concerning the manners and laws of that people, that seemed very absurd, as well in their way of making war, as in their notions of religion and divine matters - together with several other particulars, but chiefly what seemed the foundation of all the rest, their living in common, without the use of money, by which all nobility, magnificence, splendour, and majesty, which, according to the common opinion, are the true ornaments of a nation...

This society as Hythloday saw it had all issues of current Europe sorted out, there was a smoothly functioning system for all the spheres of life.



“Sir Thomas More [...] coined the word ‘utopia’ from the Greek *ou-topos* meaning ‘no place’ or ‘nowhere’. But this was a pun - the almost identical Greek word *eu-topos* means a good place” (British Library). These two explanations of the origin seem to fit very well both to ordinary people’s understanding of the word utopia: it is such a society that does not exist in reality and that would be working ideally for its inhabitants.

In other words, quoting Sargent’s ‘Utopian Studies’ in Tom Moylan’s work, utopia is “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space” (Moylan 74). In this case, none is mentioned about the society being idealised, whereas dystopia is defined by Sargent using the same words adding that “the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view [the non-existent society] as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived” (Moylan 74).

Seigneuret thinks that the definitions of some utopian scholars “are so broad that almost anything proposing a different society becomes utopian” and says that all of them can agree on three characteristic features, only the extend of particular attributes is different for every utopian work. The three characteristics are: “a utopia is fictional, it deals with a specific unit of society, and its basic theme is the political framework of that unit” (1351).

Dystopia on the other hand is the “dark opposite” of utopia. He mentions the origin of the word coming from the Greek *dys-*, bad + *topos*, place, and calls the dystopian societies “the nightmare world of the future” (Seigneuret 421). Some of the most important reasons that caused the turn from utopia to dystopia, somewhere in the early 1900s, as Seigneuret lists them are “the Second World War [...], First World War [...], the threat of nuclear extinction; the rise of the modern totalitarian state; the ecological crisis; the often questionable benefits of technological and social innovations” (421). Tom Moylan writes about dystopia and says that “dystopia expresses a simple refusal of modern society” and it “register[s] the impact of an unseen and unexamined social system on the everyday lives of everyday people” (xii, xiii).

As was already noted, sometimes utopia and dystopia overlap. Though both terms are

likely to have opposed meanings, there are topics that offer a utopian view for some and dystopian for others. Anna Vaninskaya believes that “a political creed may be simultaneously the object of utopian hopes and dystopian fears. That one person’s utopia can act as another’s dystopia is a fundamental paradox of utopian thought”. As for Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, some see it as a utopia, some as a dystopic book. We are going to consider it dystopic because of its clear hints to dissatisfaction of many inhabitants and lack of individual freedom and ability to voluntarily choose a different way of life without control.

Some authors make a difference between the terms dystopia and antiutopia. Tom Moylan writes that “the dystopian text does not guarantee a creative and critical position that is implicitly militant or resigned. As an open form, it always negotiates the continuum between the Party of Utopia and the Party of AntiUtopia” (xiii), whereas it aims “to register the impact of an unseen and unexamined social system on the everyday lives of everyday people. [...] The dystopian text opens in the midst of an ‘elsewhere’ that appears to be far worse than any in the ‘real’ world” (xiii).

Seigneuret claims an anti-utopian writer to be against utopia, to be one who thinks every kind of utopia must sooner or later provoke anti-utopian thoughts of its readers and “the more utopia becomes itself, the more it becomes its opposite” (422).

### *1.2 Historical events in the 1920s as influence on Huxley*

Aldous Huxley was born in England in 1894. Martin Overton says: “to understand Aldous Huxley’s work it is only necessary to have been born too late” (99). One of Huxley’s technological issues that we consider now to be an ordinary fun because we are ‘born too late’, was the appearance of sound added to the silent films, a topic largely commented on by Huxley himself. This cinematographic progress did not bring him the pleasure it probably did to the other audience but it made him apply his personal terror into his work and elaborate it into his feelies cinemas. In his essay Huxley comments on his first visit to the cinema with

sound, in 1930, which was not even one of the earliest projections, as most British theatres were already able to project films with soundtracks (talkies). He writes about his experience and touches the fact that he saw his first talkie rather late: “This is one of those cases where it is most decidedly better never than late”. He goes on and recounts his feelings: “The spectacle, I repeat, was really terrifying. For the first time, I felt grateful for the defect of vision which had preserved me from an earlier acquaintance with such aspects of modern life. And at the same time I wished that I could become, for the occasion, a little hard of hearing” (Huxley, ‘Silence is Golden’). According to Laura Frost, “for Huxley [...], cinema is symptomatic of cultural degeneration”. Huxley then transfers his disgust with the cheap entertainment into the feelies and John the Savage feels what Huxley felt.

Baird’s invention of television and its introduction in 1926 was important at that time. By 1932 when *Brave New World* was published television and the broadcasting system were still in their infancy, although the BBC started its regular TV broadcasts in 1930. Although television was far from being a commonplace in households, Huxley predicted its huge development. Apart from television, there were also other labour-saving appliances or devices that were used for pleasure and those “were either invented or developed into viable commercial products [...like] electric irons, toasters, refrigerators, air-conditioners, radio, [...] and vacuum cleaners” (Scott).

Other inventions of the 1920s that might have possibly influenced Huxley’s view of the future were loudspeakers in 1924 which were not the very first ones but such that emitted sounds of quite a good quality already or the improvement of a dial telephone which made it easier for the user to operate the telephone and left one of his or her hands free to take notes or move it elsewhere. Also there was further development of radio and television and they were confirmed as widely used media. Moreover, the hair dryer started being used in homes, the penicillin was discovered in 1928 (though it started saving lives several years later). The invention of the bulldozer 1923 also must have made life easier and made man feel more

powerful. Even such things like the Q-tips from 1923 or car radios helped to improve the quality of civilized life.

Richards and Waibel comment on the period in the sense of people losing the hope in a bright future and the feeling of the need to find a new point in one's life:

The Enlightenment's view of the individual as an autonomous being making rational choices in a meaningful universe was gone, and with it optimism about the future of Western civilizations. The individual was now cut adrift in a cold, mysterious universe without any coherent answer to the question "Who am I?" At best, the individual was a random chance "happening", thrown up by impersonal universe whose ultimate reality was only the molecules of which he or she was composed. (70).

They suggest a person now feels lost in the world. Suddenly, the view of future became more pessimistic because of the war, the "economic crises and social dislocations that followed" and the authors also say that "instead of value for humans and history there is no value" (72, 74). People were disgruntled and there was little to hope for.

Another key topic for Huxley related to happenings in the 1920s were the beginnings of infertility treatment and experiments connected to fertilization, research in the field of human sexuality and reproductive endocrinology. There were new infertility clinics being opened and hormones progesterone and estrogen were identified in 1928 and 1929 but the in vitro fertilization as Huxley described it was far not true yet at that time. Joseph Needham, British scientist, historian and Sinologist in his *Brave New World* review appreciates Huxley's knowledge of contemporary biological research and considers his future predictions relevant according to the expected development. In his review included in Watt in 1932 he writes: "it may well be that only biologists and philosophers will really appreciate the full force of Mr. Huxley's remarkable book [...] and there will be many [who] will say, we can't believe all this, the biology is all wrong, it couldn't happen" (204). But, he says, "the biology is perfectly right" (204) as there were already successful cultivation experiments with the embryos of

animals and only in 1978 the first real test-tube baby was born.

His visit to the United States of America in 1926 is considered to have the largest impact on Huxley's vision. It made him rather pessimistic about the future. In his essay 'The Outlook for American Culture: Some Reflections in a Machine Age'. Huxley comments on the relation of the United States to the rest of the world: "The future of America is the future of the world. Material circumstances are driving all nations along the path in which America is going. [...] For good or for evil, it seems the world must be Americanized" (quoted in Abravanel 40). In America in the 1920s there was a business boom that caused growth in the field of machines, factories and mass production. The reasons for the economic boom were probably World War I and how it affected the technology, Taylorism (which was a system that made each factory worker more productive because it was established how individual parts of the job should be done so that the job was done like by a machine, the workers got better tools and were motivated more), workers' productivity increase, psychology of consumption and relations between the federal government and big business.

Because of all the growth and development in the United States Susan Currell calls this period "a decade of unremitting prosperity and machine-made pleasure" (169). American homes needed more equipment including electricity, lighting or heating alongside appliances that required energy such as fridges, stoves, washing machines, kettles or toasters. All of those were now produced more cheaply because of increased demand. Huxley also saw textile industries making more clothes and consumers driving cars and buying. Currell quotes Leo Wolman who wrote in 1929 that "it would be difficult to find anywhere in economic history so swift and pervasive a revolution as the expansion in production and use of the motor car over this period". In the mass car production Henry Ford has an irreplaceable role with his use of conveyor belt and precise set of moves that led to producing a car every 24 seconds. Together with the expanding number of people using cars there were new roads necessary and also petrol stations or motels and also people changed their "social behaviour" (171). In

addition to the new leisure time activity of auto-camping, cars also provided a place for young lovers and their sexual behaviour became more free.

People could afford to buy all these gadgets and machines also because of hire purchase and increased credits from banks. As a result, many families got into debts. The situation in the United States is discussed in Herbert Hoover's campaign speech from 1928: "It has come nearer to the abolition of poverty, to the abolition of fear of want, than humanity has ever reached before. Progress of the past seven years is the proof of it". Susan Currell further explains that thanks to the growth in machine production there were less people necessary to work and they gained more free time. That was a "victory that seemed to lead to a new and higher phase of civilisation" (172). That was short before the Wall Street Crash when the conditions for life were rather satisfying.

Apart from material possessions, entertainment expanded and changed. The entertainment grew more commercialised and less expensive with the increase of the free time and available financial sources. The workers had less hours to work and in order to support consumption, the employers started interfering with the free time of the workers. Such activities became popular one had to pay for – cinema, tourism or magazines. Raymond B. Fosdick asks the question in his *The Old Savage in the New Civilization* (1928), as quoted in Currell "is man to be the master of the civilization he has created, or is he to be its victim?" (Currell 186).

New products and advertisement pressurized women to look after themselves more and take a better care of their appearance in the modern competitive world, also bringing the first Miss America contest in 1921; and both genders to take up more exercise or a new diet in relation to new scientific discoveries about food like vitamins and calories.

As for performing arts, jazz became the popular music of the era and at the same time it was being spurned by the older generation as it was considered immoral and rejecting old traditions. Preston William Slosson's opinions from *The Great Crusade and After: 1914–*

1928, describe jazz as “low-brow, degenerate, savage and uncivilised [...] the words jazz and culture were seen as oppositional terms; the former was modern, discordant, improvisatory and accessible, while the latter was traditional, harmonious, rehearsed and intellectual” (quoted in Currell 83). According to Currell, also “many reformers believed the music encouraged an immoral and sexually charged atmosphere in which traditional controls were loosened” (84). Some Americans saw a big danger in jazz especially for girls who were threatened by the sex and emotions jazz expressed. Also it gave more freedom to African-Americans who would play it a lot and the places they used for playing were venues of worse reputations, often brothels or such places decent people were not supposed to go.

As for a change in literary topics, women writers started exploring and writing about sex before marriage, lesbianism, abortion or birth control.

In contrast to all this fun there was the ban on alcohol sale and manufacture from 1920 to 1933 in the USA. Though it was allowed for medical or religious purposes, the sale was prohibited and therefore there were also people who made large amounts of money on illegal alcohol supply.

After a decade of promising development there was the 1929 Wall Street Crash. As much as American events influenced the world in the previous time, it gave many people in the Western World negative thoughts about the future after the crash.

### *1.3 The communist model*

This part's main interests are the world developments in Stalin's Russia especially in 1930s and 1940s and the influence of communism during Spanish Civil War. These were partly the reasons for George Orwell imagining the dark society of the future. Pohl writes about Orwell's motifs.

There is no doubt Orwell's main target in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was Stalin's Russia.

He said so explicitly. But it was not his only target. The shabby misery of Airstrip One

reflects a lot of postwar Moscow, but even more of postwar England, when the bills for the victorious war all came in and most Britons found themselves rather worse off than they had been during hostilities. (109)

Orwell himself defines communism as a tendency included in nationalism and what a nationalist wants is to “secure more power and more prestige, not for himself but for the nation or other unit in which he has chosen to sink his own individuality. [...] He persuades himself that it [his side] is the strongest, and is able to stick to his belief even when the facts are overwhelmingly against him” (Orwell, ‘Notes on Nationalism’). He further says that nationalists deceive themselves when they become a part of a system and they trust themselves in doing right. However, Orwell did not reject socialism as a whole, he was a socialist himself but Stalin’s Russia had a system he did not agree with.

According to Ziegler, the system Stalin established was highly totalitarian and it practiced following.

Total control over the thoughts and behavior of the population [...]. Political power is highly centralized in a single party headed by a dictator; all other political parties, interest groups, and social and cultural organizations are either banned or thoroughly dominated by the ruling party. The economy is tightly controlled by the government; business and agriculture are either owned outright by the state or run by government bureaucrats. Virtually all aspects of life, including those usually reserved to the private sphere, are politicized. Education and the mass media are controlled by the state, censorship is exercised, and the public is subject to government propaganda and attempts at behavior modification. Government actions are justified through a single ideology, and ideological competitors such as religion and other philosophies are harassed or destroyed. State-sponsored terror is employed to ensure complete obedience. (98)

Such description may have seemed too harsh to many who did not believe in the terror but a



lot of facts were not shown, especially abroad.

Living conditions and events in Russia in the 30s very closely resemble the situation Orwell described. Beginning in the 20s and going through the 30s and 40s, such style in culture and architecture became popular that did not need a lot of fantasy to create but served the political purpose well. “Art should be accessible to the masses, promote communist values, and not be too complicated” (Ziegler 89). Since then creativity was pushed to the background and the style of socialist realism started. In literature the heroes took over the qualities of ideal role-models for ordinary people, they “sacrificed themselves for the common good” (Ziegler 90) and refused what did not relate to socialism. The heroes often possessed such qualities that are hardly achievable by ordinary people.

Special attention was devoted to youngsters who did community hikes, attended labour brigades or joined different clubs. Everything they took part in was meant to promote the Party and to teach the Young obedience and loyalty and it worked for the new generation, they loved the heroes both from Russian history and the current and shared the enthusiasm the Party wanted them to have. The feeling of progress and pride the citizens were supposed to have, though not in comparison with other countries, was caused by “opening up of new mineral deposits, the building of new roads, canals and railroads, the construction of giant industrial plants, pioneering achievements in Arctic exploration and in aviation” (Rauch 257). On purpose there was no indicator that would show comparison with other countries. Also, what older people accepted unwillingly and with resignation, “the younger generation, which accepted Stalin’s history of the Party as gospel truth, [considered the terrorist methods of the regime] a necessary evil from which one turned to the business of the day” (Rauch 257). They were devoted and did trust the system.

However, the generation of the children of the 30s became disillusioned in the 40s: the Party they believed in betrayed them and a new social class took over. There was no rule any more concerning an ordered percentage of working class university students, after 1932 the

proportions started changing and after 1938 there were no figures available for the number of working class students. The number dropped even more after universities and secondary schools had to be paid for from 1940. Therefore young people “felt that a basic socialist achievement of which they had been justly proud was being abandoned” (Rauch 258-259).

The year 1928 meant a big change for industry and production because of the first five-year plan. Now there were the same standardized products everywhere: people not only had nothing to choose from but also the quality went down because of the high quotas set by the government. The most money was given to heavy industry - “coal, steel, cement, electric power, machine tools, and tractors, rather than consumer goods” (Ziegler 93) so that the standard of living decreased. According to the official records the national income and industrial production increased, “the worth of these statistics in the face of the pauperization of the working masses is dubious” (Rauch 255). What did increase were armaments from 1938 and the military budget was vast because of the coming war.

In factories extremely high quotas were set and the impact of these impossible quotas were mocked written records of production alongside with untraceable real results of the state’s economy. Soon there were competitions in higher production and people who broke records in their own quotas became role models and heroes to motivate other workers to fight for their bonuses. After the collectivisation in agriculture started and millions died of starvation in 1932-1933 in villages the system would have to fail at least in the eyes of other countries. However, the government managed to hide the facts and to make the Soviet Union look “wave of the future” (Ziegler 96) compared to the Great Depression in America at that time. And as for the famine, Georg von Rauch even says that it “was, in part, government planned” (221). In the new Constitution the following rights were established: the right to strike, the right to change the place of work and more freedoms that actually were only written on the paper and were not realised in practice.

Approximately in 1928 show trials began. The peak years for the purges, 1936-38,

said to be “partly driven by Stalin’s paranoia” (Ziegler 97) were meant to eliminate all possible opposition and they started with what is said to be an assassination of an important Party Member Sergei Mironovich Kirov by Trotsky, though it is not certain to have been the truth. There was a huge number of prisoners arrested for different purposes and as Rauch states, “imprisonment was to serve not so much as a punishment as a means of re-education” (246). To start with, the deportations were surrounded with bigger affairs, later they happened “noiselessly”, because the “propagandistic exposure was no longer opportune or necessary” (Ziegler 252).

In the 1934, it was agreed at a Party Congress that history had been taught wrong and the textbooks for secondary schools should be rewritten. Later in 1938, the what is called “Stalin’s history book” by Rauch needed to “prove ideologically that the millions of victims who had fallen by the wayside had been necessary sacrifices” (254).

In this period, family bonds were supported also by the new law formulation in 1936 and such in order to secure the national safety and also to foster in people the ability to watch others carefully, “which in some cases implies denunciations” (Rauch 233). Also, one partner from a working couple travelling abroad often meant the other partner needed to be kept “as a hostage” (Rauch 233). Since 1938 then, even a family member of a run-away person was made to bear responsibility and could be punished. Moreover, the possible enemies of the Party were after arrest, according to Rauch, “in continuous interrogations [...] subjected to unspeakable psychological and physical tortures until their resistance was broken and they were ready to sign the statements put before them” (244). As Rauch continues, the psychological interrogation took too much time and there were way too many people to question, more physical pressure came into use. Many deaths of also important Communist were queer especially in 1937-38. Furthermore, as Rauch says “it is not at all certain that the assassins of Menzhinsky, Kuibyshev and Gorky actually belonged to the opposition” (245).

As for the changes in history, Peter Adler in the documentary remarks that Stalin

“Later [] had history rewritten for the big screen. Wherever Lenin is, Stalin is always at his side”, also it is said that Stalin changed his very records, even the date and year of his birth (the original year being 1878 but the official was 1879). As Mr Radzinsky, Stalin’s biographer says in Adler, “Stalin did everything he could to confuse people who wanted to investigate his life. He changed the dates of his father’s birth and death...”. Since there was no problem in lying about the facts of his own life there was definitely no reason to hesitate in other areas either.

Also, there seems to be an interesting equivalence between Stalin and O’Brien from *Nineteen-Eighty Four*. Stalin must have had a sort of charisma that made masses love him despite what he did, one could see that after his death when people cried for him. O’Brien also tortures Winston but he still gets his admiration and love. Even though Stalin died after Orwell did, and Orwell did not witness his death, the masses admired him through his life too. There is a proof by a witness in Adler’s documentary, the woman called Chichinadze says: “I’d lost so many close relatives. But the thing is, ... I don’t know, but there definitely was something that made me weep that day.”

For Orwell though, the thoughts of some particular aspects of the society he writes about in *Nineteen-Eighty Four* originated earlier during the time he spent in Spain. When he came there, on the Boxing Day of 1936 during the Civil War, he could see the working class in charge and pictures of the hammer with the sickle on the walls. There was POUM, the United Marxist Workers’ Party which was Marxist but anti-Stalinist and these who e.g. did not approve of the Moscow Show Trials were called Trotskyists and Anarchists became a “Soviet target” (Bowker 205). Orwell sympathised with the POUM and for a long time during his stay in Spain he felt “simple hostility to Stalinist Communism” (Bowker 224) but when his young friend Bob Smilie died in prison after being kicked severely into his stomach, Orwell considered his death more than pointless and it probably made him feel “deep-dyed loathing of it [Stalinist Communism]” (Bowker 224). Nevertheless, he did not turn away from

socialism, as Bowker says, “if anything, his Spanish experience strengthened it” (224). Orwell then left Spain after a few months being there and though on his body he got only slightly injured on the front, his experience left consequences and he was leaving having nightmares about concentration camps, torturing and assassination. Bowker says, “the after-effects on him would be long lasting and profound” and that Orwell “had learned a hard lesson, especially about the new political Europe” (226). According to ‘An Interlude in Spain’ by Charles d’Ydewalle, he also started thinking about the fact that “People are not punished for specific offences, but because they are considered to be politically or intellectually undesirable” (quoted in Bowker 226). It is obvious and proven that the imprisonment based on no facts are not Orwell’s inventions for *Nineteen-Eighty Four* but kept happening ordinarily.

## 2. Chapter Two: *Brave New World*

This chapter focuses on Aldous Huxley's book *Brave New World*. It analyses some points considered crucial or important for the work, for the reader and for the future that was yet to come for Huxley. It also deals with several critical articles, essays or books written by different authors on the topic of *Brave New World*. The issues chosen for a further analysis are: the society as a whole and how it works, the thought of an individual living in order to be beneficial for the society, friendship and whether it can be found in the ordinary sense of the word, family life and whether it exists, the way of conditioning citizens to behave the desired way, activities for free-time consumption, the role of science and what possibilities people have when they do not fit into this society. It is going to discuss these issues based on *Brave New World* itself, several critical writings and my own reading.

### 2.1 The "Ideal" Society

The future society shown by Aldous Huxley is based on scientific progress. There are devices used on an everyday basis and science accompanies an individual from the moment of his or her creation until the time of his/her death. Nevertheless, one can feel that development is at a standstill even though it is not obvious to the users. Real science is too dangerous for the stability and is not allowed: "...all our science is just a cookery book, with an orthodox theory of cooking that nobody's allowed to question" (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16). Scientific inventions are carefully used for a specific purpose, starting with the exact planning of one's personality, qualities and intelligence. In this world mankind has come to some goals many people yearn for and has obliterated many a person's nuisances. "...At long last, mankind has succeeded in eliminating disease, aggression, war, pain, anxiety, suffering, hatred, guilt, envy, and grief. But this victory comes at a heavy price: homogenization, mediocrity, pacification, spurious contentment, trivial pursuits, shallow attachments, debasement of tastes, and souls without loves or longings." (Kass)

An individual is now predestined to belong to a group, to do a certain job and during his or her growth in the bottle and during the early childhood he or she is given correct habits, opinions and views. Conditioning is not necessary when one is a grown up, it all happens in advance. According to Booker, “the citizens of Huxley’s dystopia are conditioned to react automatically without thought or feeling” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 49) and their automatic behaviour is based on thorough conditioning, no way on punishment after breaking the rules.

The main occupation of the *Brave New World*’s citizens is to be happy and satisfied. According to Kass: “...[the] individuals spend most of their time in the pursuit of instant happiness” and there is no “freedom to be unhappy”. Such a pattern is highly supported, recommended and demanded by the government: “People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16). There are no deep emotions desired, as for leisure time people play sports with complicated rules, have free promiscuous sex or go to the feelies. Such occupations are meant to “distort the reality” and “provide artificial pleasures which dim the mind” (Varricchio). One is not supposed to think about serious problems and try to solve them and the films people watch do not give anything apart from a simple plot with a huge amount of sensual feelings. That would be extremely against believes of the society: “you can’t make tragedies without social instability” ( Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16). All that is created to entertain has to be kept simple and easy for thinking, otherwise the society would become unstable. Having people got rid off critical thinking the government is able to decide everything instead of the people. Varricchio thinks it is especially the media that “...strengthen powers capable of controlling every single facet of their subject’s life by depriving them of all critical attitude”. When one does not get any impulse or reason to discuss the issues, it is as if they did not exist.

As for the ostensible freedom, no matter how much of it people are supposed to feel and express in their sexual manners, it is obvious that freedom, in the meaning of thinking freely, is not present. On the contrary, all the moves in life are extremely controlled,

beginning with the production of new individuals and ending with the obligation to feel as one little part of the society that is important only when working on its daily tasks but insignificant as a personality, by implication not worth crying for when dying or feeling any sorrow for oneself: “When the individual feels, the community reels” (Huxley *Brave New World* ch6). Such an approach when society does not want people to feel important as individuals would normally cause lack of self-preservation. People have to feel dying is pleasant and necessary for the old cells on the body of the society and as there are no diseases existing and no physical or mental danger people do not really worry about their lives. In the end, it is not absolutely clear whether the feeling of self-preservation is suppressed or not.

## 2. 2 *You belong to everybody*

One of the strongest points in the *Brave New World* is the break up of the stereotypical love- and trust-based relationship between a man and woman. In the new society a man does not fight to win the woman of his dreams any more and it is also not desirable for a woman to long for a man. One is considered strange and abnormal if one goes out with the same person too often, too long or for a certain time with one person only. This is unacceptable:

“I suppose you’re going out?” Lenina nodded. “Who with?” “Henry Foster.” “Again?” Fanny’s kind, rather moon-like face took on an incongruous expression of pained and disapproving astonishment. “Do you mean to tell me you’re still going out with Henry Foster?” ... “But after all,” Lenina was protesting, “it’s only about four months now since I’ve been having Henry.” “Only four months! I like that. And what’s more,” Fanny went on, pointing an accusing finger, “there’s been nobody else except Henry all that time. Has there?” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3)

Lenina does not behave the way the society expects. David Higdon even sees Lenina as a rebel that gets away throughout the book without punishment, behaving unorthodoxly but still



unnoticed by the authorities. It is her intentional monogamous behaviour that surprises and shocks her friend. Higdon says: “Lenina suffers from the desire to experience love for another and to be sexually monogamous with this being for some time—two tendencies that strike at the heart of prescribed sexual behaviour in a society mandating promiscuity as a civic duty”. No matter how Lenina feels about her being unorthodox, she “blushed scarlet; but her eyes, the tone of her voice remained defiant” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3) - she knows that she is not behaving correctly but is not willing to change and probably despite her civilized behaviour she does not even feel the necessity to do so.

Sexual partners should be exchanged often and they are unlikely to get involved in any serious relationship. A person is also not supposed to deny him/herself sexual intercourse with another person. From early childhood everybody is taught not to be shy, be absolutely open and taught that if you want someone, the other side should not refuse to take part:

“What’s the matter?” asked the Director. The nurse shrugged her shoulders. “Nothing much,” she answered. “It’s just that this little boy seems rather reluctant to join in the ordinary erotic play. I’d noticed it once or twice before. And now again today. He started yelling just now ... I’m taking him in to see the Assistant Superintendent of Psychology. Just to see if anything’s at all abnormal.” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3)

In this society it is undesirable that people feel the lack of anything whether it is sex, activities to do or new things to own. After a performance Lenina’s expression is described: “there was no trace of agitation or excitement—for to be excited is still to be unsatisfied” (*Brave New World* ch5). They are not supposed to feel anything is missing in their lives or feel that they want something and cannot get it for a while. Booker sees sex in *Brave New World* as “a sort of opiate of the masses” and a part of something “that will prevent the buildup of potentially subversive political energies” and Booker also states that the government actually wants “to reduce them [passions] by making sex a virtually meaningless activity” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 49) which is interesting because again, having more sexual partners and having the

act more often a person can prevent oneself from getting attached to one person and also, when this happens often and on a regular bases it loses its magic and loses also any deeper feelings that may be connected to it. It is comparable to reading only new literature without being provided any extra value. As stated in Theodor Adorno's work: "...sexual routine [...] turns pleasure to fun and denies it by granting it" (quoted in Frost).

The feeling of wanting something and not getting it is definitely new for Lenina. She is surprised to learn it and does not like it at all, at least seemingly, but it comes all of a sudden when she finds The Savage very attractive for her, she admires his body and visage but because of his different views she cannot take him as all the others. Surprisingly, she waits for some time, does not go straight ahead, she is not sure whether he likes her and even though she believes that she has the right to take him, she does not make the first move. She rather hesitates and also expresses the strange new feeling in front of her friend who cannot believe The Savage would not like Lenina:

"But doesn't he like you?" asked Fanny. "Sometimes I think he doesn't. He always does his best to avoid me; goes out of the room when I come in; won't touch me; won't even look at me. But sometimes if I turn round suddenly, I catch him staring; ..." ... She couldn't make it out; and not only was bewildered; was also rather upset.

(Huxley, *Brave New World* ch11)

The Savage rejects Lenina's call. Being brought up in extremely difficult surroundings with a mother to whom men from the reservation came to get love and to whom women would come to scream and fight for their husbands, the Savage hated this (his mother's and now also Lenina's) attitude. He would learn what was for him the only correct way of getting a woman from the Indians and later also from Shakespeare's works. Huxley contrasted the two cultures, that of his modern society and the Reservation's where jealousy was still very common and Linda with her different attitude caused violent scenes full of screaming back there. John's reaction to Lenina's biggest move shows the incompatibility of those two cultures, both

having evident negative features. “And as though awakened by her cry he caught her by the shoulders and shook her. ‘Whore!’ he shouted ‘Whore! Impudent strumpet!’ The Savage pushed her away with such force that she staggered and fell. ‘Go,’ he shouted, standing over her menacingly, ‘get out of my sight or I’ll kill you.’ He clenched his fists” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch13). It is apparent how the conditioning works, it is not possible to change a person who has been all his life influenced by far more different behavioural patterns and on the other hand, Lenina is not able to realize any difference. John is, a little surprisingly, extremely strong in his belief in the deserved love; he would not accept anything for free. Considering the fact that he grew up with a “civilized” polygamous mother, John adopted such partnership habits he saw elsewhere. This would be probably caused also by the fact that he hated his mother’s partners, he hated to face the villagers knowing that his mother was doing something differently and he would probably never want to behave the way she did. Linda narrates: “Even though he [John] did get so upset whenever a man ... Quite as a tiny boy, even. Once (but that was when he was bigger) he tried to kill poor Waihusiwa – or was it Popé? – just because I used to have them sometimes. Because I never could make him understand that that was what civilized people ought to do” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch7). Even though Linda tried to condition John her way, she failed absolutely because John chose the patterns that seemed more pleasant and definitely, his mother getting shouted at did not give him the desire to copy her deeds.

Even though people in *Brave New World* do usually see many partners, physical attraction is important. Whenever a person would be a little challenged, he or she might have problems seeing as many partners as the more attractive people which is interesting, because for such people (there were not many of them) unfulfilled desires would be common and thence the feelings of lacking sexappeal and ability to have what other people could. Bernard says: “Hence the laughter of the women to whom he made proposals, the practical joking of his equals among the men” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch4).

Usually, it seems women are equal to men, still there are hints that men are those who address women and speak about them as about things they can get anywhere and for a very cheap price. The reader sometimes gets the feeling that women are being talked about as a piece of more or less delicious food: “‘Talking about her as though she were a bit of meat.’ Bernard ground his teeth. ‘Have her here, have her there.’ Like mutton. Degrading her to so much mutton” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). In addition, Lenina the Rebell character is kind of unfinished, she is not sent to an island and her odds as if did not exist in comparison to abnormal men who would be sent to an island if they were as weird as Lenina sometimes is. Moreover, one fact similar to the real world is that women seem to perform jobs considered women’s jobs like working in the Hatcheries, Nurseries, The Centre for Dying and men working manually in the factories on strength requiring positions or piloting helicopters.

### 2.3 Friendship

There is not much friendship in the book. At least not in the sense of friends being close people whether of the same or different gender, who tell each other about the daily life stories and spend free time together. In *Brave New World* we come across people of the same gender talking to each other, mostly about sexual partners, but we are not informed about any friends spending a night out together. People only go out with their dates or they take part in other community events (again connected to pleasure). Also, it is important for individuals what sort of people they are friends with. A person who talks to someone who disapproves of the laws and rules is considered guilty too. Bernard, having brought John and feeling responsible for him, was not very confident when John started disobeying him: “Bernard started and looked horrified. What would the Controller think? To be labelled as the friend of a man who said that he didn’t like civilization – said it openly and, of all people, to the Controller – it was terrible” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16). Bernard is also an anxious person, though in the beginning he seemed to be a brave, free thinking personality and who

wanted to go to the Savage Reservation and had some kind of feelings for one girl: “Henry Foster patted the Assistant Predestinator on the shoulder. ‘Every one belongs to every one else, after all.’ One hundred repetitions three nights a week for four years, thought Bernard Marx, who was a specialist on hypnopædia. Sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions make one truth. Idiots” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). Bernard at first thinks unorthodoxically and seems about to become a hero but in fact he does not really think highly of himself and wishes to be more ordinary.

Bernard becomes crafty when he realises that with the help of John he could get what he never had had before – popularity. He loves being the centre of attention but John is not his friend and thus when in trouble, Bernard backs out immediately:

“They’re done for,” said Bernard and, urged by a sudden impulse, ran forward to help them; then thought better of it and halted; then, ashamed, stepped forward again; then again thought better of it, and was standing in an agony of humiliated indecision—thinking that *they* might be killed if he didn’t help them, and that *he* might be killed if he did—when (Ford be praised!), goggle-eyed and swine-snouted in their gas-masks, in ran the police. (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch15)

His inability to help friends comes from being taught that people are not that important for each other and do not have any deep relations among each other. For Bernard it is not convenient to risk anything for them. Only at this only moment we catch Bernard worried about his life and see that there is a sort of self-preservation instinct but this is also encouraged by not wanting to get involved into someone else’s troubles and adding oneself another problem. On the other hand, the fact that Bernard even seriously considered helping friends makes him different and rebellious against his will. Booker writes about Bernard: “He is not even a conscious rebel - he wants to fit in, but simply cannot...” (*Dystopian Literature* 173) and so happens also because of his physical differences and different feelings for some things but those worry him and are not intentional and heroic.

To sum up, even though the characters call each other friends, according to an ordinary supposition of what a friend should or should not be like we cannot say the characters are real friends.

#### *2.4 Family life*

Does not exist. Throughout the book the reader learns that in the New Society a family is as undesirable as deep relationships among people. The family had been abolished years ago. People are no longer required to rely on each other, help or love each other. You mustn't care about anyone too much and as long as mothers and fathers used to give up anything for their children, nowadays you are alive to live on your own, perform your duties, be satisfied and still be there for everyone else. People live with the fact that they are only one little part of the system and that their own lives are not worth much. They do not think it depressing, it is only a matter of fact. They work for society and know how to please themselves.

The words evoking family life became taboo, especially the word "mother". You are not allowed to hear it without turning red and feeling ashamed, not talking about pronouncing the word: "The smut that was really science fell with a crash into the boys' eye-avoiding silence. 'Mother,' he repeated loudly rubbing in the science; and, leaning back in his chair, 'These,' he said gravely, 'are unpleasant facts; I know it. But then most historical facts are unpleasant'" (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch2). Without the concept of mother, one was not to call any place home either, in the sense of a place considering where people live and love. Because if one lives in a group that thinks seriously, does not obey any stability rules and often seeks loneliness, one cannot be happy and sensible. The Controller tells about the past: "Home, home—a few small rooms, stiflingly over-inhabited by a man, by a periodically teeming woman, by a rabble of boys and girls of all ages. No air, no space; an understerilized prison; darkness, disease, and smells" (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (as cited in Booker) Freud writes: "The more closely the members of a family are

attached to one another, the more often do they tend to cut themselves off from others, and the more difficult it is for them to enter into the wider circle of life” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 55)

Such behaviour is eliminated in order to stabilize the society.

Therefore, it is too strange when John comes to grieve over dying Linda. It is not wanted to let the children who are being conditioned see anybody crying for a dying person when they are supposed to learn how pleasant it is to die. Even before when she was not dying yet, people did not understand why John needs to go and see Linda, a fat and ugly woman who dared to be a mother. For the reader, it is strange to see one way love between John and Linda. John shows emotions of an ordinary son and Linda does not take much notice of him and probably does not love him a lot.

The view of a family is difficult for Linda too when she is forced to stay with a baby in the reservation, with people behaving so differently than the ones she knows and actually having a baby which is for her completely wrong. Anyway, Linda does not abandon the baby, she takes a good care of it, though she regrets not being able to return to her world because of the baby. The family life in the reservation is the one we are familiar with and little John accepted their customs and behaviour codes and therefore was not willing to follow what he viewed as the senseless views of the world Bernard brought him to. The conflict between the reservation and Linda equals the troubles Linda was having accepting the new order she did not want to get involved with. Linda deals with the situation in her way. Though there is not much she can preserve of her old habits, she manages to keep her sexual freedom as the men seem rather willing to accept her invitation with much less problems than women. For the women, Linda stays unacceptable for the whole time. It is not only the issue of her affairs with men but also not being able to honour the labour the villagers have to do and not being able to perform well as a part of the working group:

He played with the little boys for a long time. Suddenly people started talking very loud, and there were the women pushing Linda away, and Linda was crying. She went

to the door and he ran after her. He asked her why they were angry. “Because I broke something,” she said. And then she got angry too. “How should I know how to do their beastly weaving” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch8)?

Linda is conditioned to love new things and throw away broken ones and it feels antisocial for her to pay attention to one particular replaceable object. That is also one of the reasons why she stays unaccepted by the villagers.

So however refused the institution of family is by the *Brave New World*'s citizens, it is shown in the life of the Reservation in its classical sense. By the leaders family is used to disgust people and prove right to the establishment of civilised world.

### *2.5 The process of conditioning*

Learning does not take place exclusively through hypnopaedia. When children are taught not to like books, they are very young. They react to external impulses and education is based on conditioned responses. They reach for a book once and when an unpleasant impulse comes, they do not want to play with books anymore:

The swiftest crawlers were already at their goal. Small hands reached out uncertainly, touched, grasped, unpetaling the transfigured roses, crumpling the illuminated pages of the books. The Director waited until all were happily busy. ... The screaming of the babies suddenly changed its tone. There was something desperate, almost insane, about the sharp spasmodic yelps to which they now gave utterance. Their little bodies twitched and stiffened; their limbs moved jerkily as if to the tug of unseen wires. ...

Books and loud noises, flowers and electric shocks—already in the infant mind these couples were compromisingly linked; and after two hundred repetitions of the same or a similar lesson would be wedded indissolubly. What man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder. (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch2)

The lower-cast children are not supposed to develop any interest in books as reading would



not bring anything good to the society and they would waste the free time they could devote to consumption and also, there was always the danger of them reading something unsuitable.

There is also classical learning to be found. The director shows students around the Hatchery Centre and the students are taking notes. We also learn that they study some history, obviously only what is meant to be known: “The Director interrupted himself. ‘You know what Polish is, I suppose?’ ‘A dead language.’ ‘Like French and German,’ added another student, officiously showing off his learning” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch2). However, the modern form of teaching is hypnopaedia. The sleep teaching is yet not just telling a different story each time the child falls asleep, it must be repeated sufficiently and what is useful to be taught are the moral principles, not the knowledge about the world to read or write. The speaker kept repeating:

Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly colour. I’m *so* glad I’m a Beta. Alpha children wear grey They work much harder than we do, because they’re so frightfully clever. I’m really awfully glad I’m a Beta, because I don’t work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I *don’t* want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They’re too stupid to be able ... (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch2)

The sleep teaching later causes very quick reactions to issues and judging them based on the acquired moral principles without questioning their correctness and applicability.

Children are also taught to feel well about people dying, in the Hospital for the Dying there are good toys, sweets, music, smell and children can play there with no worries. Also as one of the moral rules says, “everybody is replaceable”. Booker comments on this topic saying that so is done as “the elimination of any sense that individual deaths are tragic or even meaningful” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 65). In fact, from an early age a child learns that he/she is not important on his/her own, always only as a working wheel of the community.

Probably the most powerful tool in keeping the denizens peaceful and quiet is the caste system. When producing new people, it is determined what sort of a person the bottle becomes and such qualities he/she receives. For the most people are made into Epsilons and less into Alphas. Mustapha Mond compares the system: “The optimum population is modelled on the iceberg – eight-ninths below the water line, one-ninth above” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16).

The less clever people the more alike. In other words, Alphas and Betas develop out of one egg for each individual, whereas the egg for Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons is sometimes even ninety-six times divided and the same person will come ninety-six times out of one egg. The lower the cast is, the less interesting job the person has and it is impossible for another cast to perform someone else’s job because of the conditioning and this is not only because Epsilons are not bright enough to perform an Alpha’s job but also and Alpha is not fit to do an Epsilon’s job as he / she could not stand the monotonous boring and long activity which is taken well by the Epsilons.

Although all of the previous methods work and they are important for conditioning, the crucial part starts even before one can be called a human. The precise planning of what the role of a citizen will be does not allow any mistakes and is closely connected to the desire to produce as much as possible. Therefore, individuals come in tens of the exactly same humans. During growth one is given the prerequisites for the future job and it is not possible to escape one’s “social destiny” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch1). Booker compares the production of new lives to the production of new cars, “different social classes corresponding to different models or brands” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 55) and it would be very exact as there is not much surprise in what qualities an individual would have, especially not one from a lower cast who is not left any intelligence to develop any character qualities during his/her life itself.

Learning in terms of studying the past is more or less suppressed, a certain knowledge

about the past is passed on. Nevertheless, the present is what counts and as one of the moral hypnopaedic rules says: “was and will make me ill” (Huxley, *Brave New World*), the denizens are uninterested not only in the past but also in any old things - only new things are good. Booker contrasts Huxley to Nietzsche, for whom “the ability to escape the domination of the past is ultimately humanizing” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 66), and says that in Huxley, “a loss of connection with the past and with history in general is dehumanizing” (*The Dystopian Impulse* 66). Probably, we can see dehumanization as a fact that the humankind (here the ordinary people), cannot develop and cannot think about the present problems in a way it could do with the historical background and if there were some mistakes to look back at and some role models.

## 2.6 Leisure time

As in many other fields of human life in *Brave New World*, people are supposed to spend their free time doing primarily such activities that require a lot of equipment. One may introduce a new type of sport only if the consumption increases fairly. There is no place for individual sports or such which require one ball, one stick or nothing at all. Such activities that use a lot of apparatus are preferred and only such new games are allowed if they are played by many players and with many tools: “Nowadays the Controllers won’t approve of any new game unless it can be shown that it requires at least as much apparatus as the most complicated of existing games” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). One of the approved games for children is the Centrifugal Bumble-puppy. It is played by as many as twenty children moving around a steel tower: “A ball thrown up so as to land on the platform at the top of the tower rolled down into the interior, fell on a rapidly revolving disk, was hurled through one or other of the numerous apertures pierced in the cylindrical casing, and had to be caught” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). Musical Bridge, Riemann-surface tennis, Obstacle or Electromagnetic Golf are other approved games.

Consumption is highly encouraged. As long as transport is something that can be consumed, it is recommended to use public transport a lot. So there were sports played in the countryside and people had to travel to enjoy these. Nevertheless, the lower classes especially were conditioned to dislike nature itself because in earlier times they went for the beauty of flowers and trees, though they did use transport but did not help to keep factories busy using any other equipment.

Another way to spend time are clubs. You are not alone and there are all sorts of clubs. Men and women can play Musical Bridge at a club, swim at a country club or take part in more spiritual/erotic amusement:

Round they went, a circular procession of dancers, each with hands on the hips of the dancer preceding, round and round, shouting in unison, stamping to the rhythm of the music with their feet, beating it, beating it out with hands on the buttocks in front; twelve pairs of hands beating as one; as one, twelve buttocks slabbily resounding. Twelve as one, twelve as one. "I hear Him, I hear Him coming." The music quickened; faster beat the feet, faster, faster fell the rhythmic hands. And all at once a great synthetic bass boomed out the words which announced the approaching atonement and final consummation of solidarity, the coming of the Twelve-in-One, the incarnation of the Greater Being. "Orgy-porgy," it sang, while the tom-toms continued to beat their feverish tattoo:

"Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,

Kiss the girls and make them One.

Boys at one with girls at peace;

Orgy-porgy gives release." (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch 5)

Booker says these meetings should "invoke Ford's spirit and [...] meld into one in a denial of individuality" (*The Dystopian Impulse* 52), however there is little difference between the Fordian séance and the one happening in the Reservation. "...singing as they went, round and

round – each time a little faster; and the drums had changed and quickened their rhythm, so that it became like the pulsing of fever in the ears...” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch7). Even though the purpose is meant to be different, the impact on people is very similar. It may suggest that no matter how much one tries to change society, it is never possible to change everything and no matter how suppressed it is, although unintentionally, it reappears again.

The amount of free time is strictly controlled for all the classes. Obviously, this is done in order to keep people happy. They could work several hours a day less but then there would be longer periods of loneliness and boredom and they would not fully devote all their time to consumption. Mustapha Mond says:

The experiment was tried, more than a century and a half ago. The whole of Ireland was put on to the four-hour day. What was the result? Unrest and a large increase in the consumption of *soma*; that was all. Those three and a half hours of extra leisure were so far from being a source of happiness, that people felt constrained to take a holiday from them. (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch16)

Control of leisure time shows how unimportant the actual work is. Nearly all the work is done exclusively for the sake of producing things and keeping people occupied. They do not work to sustain themselves, their job is as insignificant as the individual men and women. It is not needed, they are not needed.

Moreover there are the Feelies cinemas. If somebody wishes to feel more pleasure, then this is not a difficulty. Feel people kissing or the bear fur on your own skin with no movement of yours necessary. So why would The Savage not like this common fun? Why should he prefer reading Othello, thinking about words and their meaning? In *Brave New World* everything is said directly. All is shown, all is expressed. There is no space for one's own fantasy, no space to deduce or think of the consequence. In fact fantasy is something truly undesirable and it concerns all fields of human activities, all they do is planned carefully and not much change is allowed. Laura Frost writes about “imbecile entertainment” for

people who “follow a prescribed routine of standardized amusement”.

All these activities are supposed to be merry, without any stress, depression or anger. The government controls the mood of people by several means. The most obvious is soma which makes people feel relaxed and happy or completely abstracted for long days. Mustapha Mond explains: “All the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; none of their defects. ... Take a holiday from reality whenever you like, and come back without so much as a headache or a mythology” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3). Lenina is a typical person who takes soma often and delightedly: “Lenina felt herself entitled, after this day of queerness and horror, to a complete and absolute holiday. As soon as they got back to the rest-house, she swallowed six half-gramme tablets of *soma*, lay down on her bed, and within ten minutes had embarked for lunar eternity. It would be eighteen hours at the least before she was in time again” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch9). Whether or not anybody considers this wasting the time is not expressed.

Being influenced by soma is similar to being under the influence of alcohol but there is no hangover after that. People are forced to deny reality whenever it becomes unpleasant and escape to their own world. At the beginning Bernard realizes that soma makes people see things differently and does not agree with the fact that there should be only pleasant things to feel. He refuses to take it and The Savage, who saw what alcohol does first and when he is offered soma, there is no difference for him. We cannot say Bernard refuses it because he would feel bad after that, neither could it remind him of alcohol which he probably had not known about before entering the reservation. Nevertheless, he feels one should be able to feel whatever life brings:

“He does look glum,” said the Assistant Predestinator, pointing at Bernard Marx....

“Glum, Marx, glum.” The clap on the shoulder made him start, look up. It was that brute Henry Foster. “What you need is a gramme of *soma*.”... “Ford, I should like to kill him!” But all he did was to say, “No, thank you,” and fend off the proffered tube

of tablets. (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch3)

For Bernard it seems more like he wants to feel the misery because it better expresses his mood and without it he can feel sorry for himself.

## 2.7 Science and the Escape

Science is the most important topic in *Brave New World*. It influences and gives order to everything concerning life. Science is glorified and learned. However, not many people can see that there is no real scientific progress and research, as too many changes and improvements might endanger stability. One could suppose, in such a world full of advanced technology scientists are supported and encouraged, but true scientists are got rid off and development is repressed and only certain things are allowed. Science is stable.

Certainly, some people are too curious and innovative and refuse to accept the rules and pleasures offered by this society. The society has to eliminate such clever minds and put them somewhere safe. Their destiny may seem cruel for some and liberation for others. They were given a new place to live, definitely a less civilised one. It provides hope that somewhere out there is still a sensible place to live. As Mustapha Mond himself explains, Bernard has nothing to worry about as the island he would be sent to is: “a place where he’ll meet the most interesting set of men and women to be found anywhere in the world. All the people who, for one reason or another, have got too self-consciously individual to fit into community-life. All the people who aren’t satisfied with orthodoxy, who’ve got independent ideas of their own. Every one, in a word, who’s any one” (Huxley, *Brave New World* ch 16). Generally, the conclusion of *Brave New World* is the feeling that the world is not reprobate and though it seems inconceivable to some characters to live outside the civilization for the reader it is positive to think that no changes for the worse have to be eternal.

### 3. Chapter three: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

This chapter's aim is to analyse George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, point out the main features of this dystopian society and discuss them based on my own reading and on criticism of this book. The chapter first depicts the society as Orwell creates it in *Nineteen-Eighty Four* and describes it as a whole. Then it continues with selected issues, that is: keeping citizens under control, family and its function, the relationships between men and women, the problem with friendship, control of the past and signs in physical conditions and appearance.

#### 3.1 *Big Brother Is Watching You*

In Orwell's work *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the general mood is depression. Everything seems to be done in order to keep the ordinary people cold, unhappy, starving and altogether in a bad physical and mental condition: "he was aware that there was no food in the kitchen except a hunk of dark-coloured bread which had got to be saved for tomorrow's breakfast" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1). It is not permitted to have a relationship full of love and sexual attraction, to fill one's stomach with tasty, good quality food, to have an interesting, satisfying and adequate job that actually helps others, it is impossible to question the administration or to get away for a while without being observed and spied on. There is no such thing as trustworthy history but one must believe implicitly and unconditionally what is being said and written about just at that particular moment and never doubt any momentary data and never look for or mention any individuals who have disappeared.

Every day people are reminded of what is above them, beyond the ability to make one's own decision based on a different standard. To serve as visual reminders that one is being watched all the time there are posters of Big Brother's face everywhere: "The blackmoustachio'd face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was one on the house-front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said,



while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1). There are microphones elsewhere and on top of that, there are screens. The telescreens that can never be turned off completely just turned down a little and that not only bring information into the place, they also capture whatever is happening in front of them. Even police helicopters fly around to spy on people: "In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and darted away again with a curving flight. It was the police patrol, snooping into people's windows" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1).

There is a never ending war, or so people are told, between Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia, with Oceania in alliance with one of them at a time and at war with the other. Though they keep changing, for everyone the only and biggest enemy has always been the current one. Violence is bragged about: it is shown in the cinemas and spoken about in the radio. People are meant to hate the enemy and wish them death. People are manipulated and told once the war is at its full speed, sometimes it is coming to the end: "Our forces in South India have won a glorious victory. I am authorized to say that the action we are now reporting may well bring the war within measurable distance of its end" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch2). People are made to believe they have given up a slight bit of their own comfort for the war and still made to believe they are doing better than a few years back. The data speak clearly – the standard of living has never been better.

Whereas the members of the Outer Party like Winston are strictly controlled, a big part of London inhabitants are left unattended. These are the proles. They are not forced to be politically loyal, they have no common beliefs, they fall in love, get divorced – the problem is they are also left in poverty and exhausting conditions.

They were born, they grew up in the gutters, they went to work at twelve, they passed through a brief blossoming-period of beauty and sexual desire, they married at twenty, they were middle-aged at thirty, they died, for the most part, at sixty. Heavy physical

work, the care of home and children, petty quarrels with neighbours, films, football, beer, and above all, gambling, filled up the horizon of their minds. (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch7).

Although some people from the Party believe a revolution – if one should happen – would come from the proles, not only they do not seem getting ready for any, they also might not feel the urge to do so.

So unlike the proles, the Party members have to behave the way they are expected to, take care about what feelings they express, what people they meet, how excitedly they appear to the public events and they should not be too bright and reasonably thinking on their own. Anybody can be a good spy - a co-worker, a neighbour, a wife or one's own kid. There are many rules that are not written but to break even such rule may mean a disappearance from the world surface, in a better case imprisonment.

### 3.2 *Its all about obedience. Or is it?*

The overall political system requires citizens who do not question any Party's moves, trust everything they are told and keep smiling. According to Booker, "the Party, like the Christian God, wants not just to be obeyed but to be obeyed willingly and worshipfully" (*The Dystopian Impulse* 73). One could say that Parson is a good example of this. His intelligence is not high, he believes all the facts the Party gives him, he works for the good of the Party and he devotes his free time to the community. He wants to be a good spy and bring his children up the best way. He would never intentionally say or do anything against the Party, nor would he even think of it. Winston sees in him a stupid servile human, exactly who the Party needs. He thinks Parsons belongs to the sort of people who are never vaporized. They spy on other people and serve the Party well.

Therefore when Winston encounters Parsons in prison one wonders whether there is a type of person at all that is safe in this world. It seems impossible for anyone to feel secure,

even if this person lacks the intelligence and does whatever he or she is told to do, does not doubt the Party and does not commit any thought crimes. What is left to suppose is, “obedience is not enough” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch3), everyone must feel endangered at all times and there is no safe behaviour whatsoever; the fact that even the most servile Party members get imprisoned gives even more fear. Steinhoff writes that Parsons, just like all the people, is “guilty only of being, not doing” (151). That only proves the idea the Party even claims itself: “The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch3).

There is also the war for this purpose and also personal fear, another tool for keeping people subordinate. For the purposes of control it is good that citizens are Party-fearing, as much as the Christians are God-fearing. Booker also compares this arrangement to Christianity and suggests the ideas the Party uses were taken from the Christians or religion generally. The Two Minutes Hate is somewhat similar to going to church, only people are much more emotional: “People were leaping up and down in their places and shouting at the tops of their voices in an effort to drown the maddening bleating voice that came from the screen” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1). The hysteria overwhelms the whole crowd, not even a bright mind can avoid it and even though thinking against the party, it is completely under control during this procedure.

The control tool - war - is very special. The reader feels that there is actually no real war, although the bombs are often planted and the cinemas show people dying. The war is essential to keep hatred and goods or food shortages: “In the centres of civilization war means no more than a continuous shortage of consumption goods, and the occasional crash of a rocket bomb which may cause a few scores of deaths” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2ch9). The Party lets people celebrate small victories of the war and hate the defeats but it also keeps them worried that the war would never end. Through all the discomfort people suffer from the

Party “intensifies the importance and effectiveness of Party-designed experiences such as the group ecstasy of the Two Minutes’ Hate ... these frenzied expressions of loyalty to the Party provide but a temporary distraction from the endless discomforts and physical self-restraint to which the citizens then return” (Jacobs). It is suggested that the more people have to put up with in the everyday lives the more negative emotions they are able to produce in favour of the Party.

### *3.3 The so-called family*

The family exists. A man and a woman get married, have children and live together the way it usually is. So there is nothing special about the form of the family. A few people share a place to live and their daily activities and issues. However, as with every other aspect of life, family life is also altered to serve the Party. The biggest advantage of keeping families is that they are a good tool for spying on people. The people closest to you are with you all the time, and so they can observe even when you are sleeping, they can see your weakness, abnormalities and judge your deeds in detail. It becomes a sort of a hobby. Those who most often report a family member are the children, the exemplary Party members and the future. They are encouraged to do so and praised after that. Parents on the other hand tend to see children in the old ordinary way and be proud of them, even after they become a huge threat for the parents. Although Winston does not have any children of his own, he can see well what the neighbours’ children are like:

Suddenly they were both leaping round him, shouting “Traitor!” and “Thought-criminal!” the little girl imitating her brother in every movement. It was somehow slightly frightening, like the gambolling of tiger cubs which will soon grow up into man-eaters. There was a sort of calculating ferocity in the boy’s eye, a quite evident desire to hit or kick Winston and a consciousness of being very nearly big enough to do so. (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch2)

Children are no longer taught to respect and honour their parents. As long as people are not meant to feel safe anywhere, one's own family would be the first place that needed to be undermined. The incentives for the children are strong and they live happily, though it is only a matter of time before they themselves begin to feel unsafe and endangered.

The other function of creating a family, apart from setting a surrounding for spies, is to conceive children. The members of the party need permission to marry a particular person, and this is not received if there is a sign of sexual attraction to that person of opposite sex. Love and eroticism have been eliminated, as it is not desired for people to take any pleasure in it. The reasons may be that it was something the Party can not control and it allows people escape into their own momentary world, another that Julia could see was that: "sexual privation induced hysteria, which was desirable because it could be transformed into war-fever and leader-worship" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2 ch3). There are especially many women who would like to see themselves becoming pregnant only by means of artificial insemination. Therefore, if there is a married couple who can not serve the Party and deliver babies, they may have no reason at all to stay together. As Booker calls it: "the Party sees sex as existing primarily for the purpose of manufacturing human beings" (*Dystopian Literature* 211). Winston himself knows such a case. Though his wife Katharine is beautiful, Winston finds there is nothing he could admire inside her, as he thinks she believes too much what she is told by the Party and, there would be no physical contact that she would enjoy:

As soon as he touched her she seemed to wince and stiffen. To embrace her was like embracing a jointed wooden image. And what was strange was that even when she was clasping him against her he had the feeling that she was simultaneously pushing him away with all her strength. The rigidity [*sic*] of her muscles managed to convey that impression. She would lie there with shut eyes, neither resisting nor co-operating but submitting. (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch6)

No matter how unpleasant this act was for Katharine, she would insist on trying to produce a

baby for the Party. It is a rebellion to lead an enjoyable sexual life. In comparison to Party members, the proles do not need to keep any anger and hysteria for the politics, thus there is no political need to deny them any pleasures.

In fact, the Party-like model of family behaviour is not transmitted to the proles at all. They are free this way, concerning sexuality there is even pornography produced by the Party for the proles and those are only women working at the Pornosec, “men, whose sex instincts were less controllable than those of women, were in greater danger of being corrupted by the filth they handled” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2 ch3). The support of the proles’ desire should, by contrast, prevent them from any political dissatisfaction and albeit they are said to be free, they are as controlled as the Party members with these very tools – they satisfy the emotional sides of themselves having ordinary families and other deep-based relationships. Many Party members expect them to rise and revolt but they do not understand that the proles in fact have what a person needs most, regardless of their poverty. As Steinhoff states: “the proles in *Nineteen-Eighty Four* may be vulgar and ignorant, but they are admirably human in their affections and outlook” (159). In comparison to the Party members, the proles are rich in their emotional lives.

### *3.4 Men with / versus women*

The relationship between man and woman is closely connected to family life. As was pointed out before, the only desired bond between men and women is meant to fulfil political aims. It is clear that in an ordinary loyal family there is no love, understanding or support. Nevertheless, throughout the book there are several moments when the Party members find themselves in situations ruled by natural instincts and passions and thus rebelling, the most obvious example being Winston. However it is obvious from all aspects of his life that he is not an ordinary obedient person. Starting with his marriage with Katharine. Winston did not share the regular act of “our duty to the Party” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch6), he

would have appreciated if Katharine showed more enthusiasm, but at that time he probably knew it would not be possible: “Desire was thoughtcrime. Even to have awakened Katharine, if he could have achieved it, would have been like a seduction, although she was his wife” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch6). But later Winston had to seek a woman from the proles, a prostitute: “He had taken a step towards her and then halted, full of lust and terror” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch6). In theory, it was strictly forbidden to find sexual partners among the Party members, but in practice, somehow the Party supported or secretly allowed the prole prostitutes. The fact that the male Party members had unwritten permission to seek a prostitute among the proles and also knowing that they did not work in the Porn section because they were weaker allow us to wonder whether Orwell really thought of men as individuals so unable to control their instincts that in such a regime they were practically allowed this otherwise unthinkable excess.

Before Winston met Julia, he was not exactly fond of women. He found them strict Party members and usually denouncers; he thought it was even worse when they were beautiful as they used it to make men suffer: “It was always the women, and above all the young ones, who were the most bigoted adherents of the Party, the swallows of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch1). Again, men are shown as weak parts and women are in charge.

After Winston starts seeing Julia, it is evident that the methods the Party uses are not as powerful as they should be. Julia looks like a typical member of the Junior Anti-Sex League and at first evokes the thoughts of being a spy, therefore Winston does not trust her and it also takes time until his feelings allow him to relax and be comfortable with being intimate: “At the beginning he had no feeling except sheer incredulity. ... But the truth was that he had no physical sensation, except that of mere contact. All he felt was incredulity and pride. He was glad that this was happening, but he had no physical desire. It was too soon, her youth and prettiness had frightened him...” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2ch2) Even

though the love-making continues, it is never described very enthusiastically. Naomi Jacobs writes: “he [Winston] imagines beating and killing her [Julia] in much more detail than he imagines making love to her”. So either, people are actually under Party’s influence much more than they think and Orwell suggests there is really no escape and full revolt or he just did not think it necessary to inform the reader in more detail.

### 3.5 Friendship

Though called friends, nothing like that really exists among the Party members. The people one meets on a daily basis are the ones he/she talks to but the topics are somehow given, there is no way to talk about real issues because of the ceaseless fear. There is work to talk about up to a certain point, maybe children and how well they are doing in the Spies, and then of course the Party events or war. Such people might as well be called just colleagues or co-workers. Anyway, the more one talks to a particular person, the more afraid he/she could be of them for there is always something to be found about a person who seems to be threatening.

One such dangerous co-worker for Winston and others is Parsons. Winston thinks he is very servile to the Party: “He was a fattish but active man of paralysing stupidity, a mass of imbecile enthusiasms - one of those completely unquestioning, devoted drudges on whom, more even than on the Thought Police, the stability of the Party depended” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch2).

Syme on the other hand, is better in the eyes of Winston. He belongs to the sort of people who, as Winston thinks, would be vaporized sooner or later. Though he does not say or do much against the laws, Winston found some of his qualities compromising: “He is too intelligent. He sees too clearly and speaks too plainly. The Party does not like such people. One day he will disappear. It is written in his face” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch5). One of the reasons is also that sometimes Winston only thinks of an unorthodox way of



finishing a sentence or a remark and he can see Syme understands, he shares his ideas and some points of view without mentioning.

We may say another person Winston secretly considers a friend is O'Brien, albeit he is unsure whether he is not the complete opposite at the beginning. Later on he gains the feeling that O'Brien is a person who is able to turn things around and help Winston participate in a revolt. One who is as bad as Winston himself. That creates in Winston trust and admiration. This strange attitude and admiration to O'Brien continues - he does good or bad things, he is in the position of an unknown person giving secret signs or a tyrant, through the story he is still sort of the same person in Winston's eyes, one can perceive Winston like a little dog that is owned by O'Brien and maybe was found by him somewhere in the dark dirty streets of a town, then brought to his home, fed nice treats and after a while beaten up severely. Still, Winston the dog feels devoted to him and does not admit to himself that he would have been better off staying alone in the dirty streets:

He had never loved him so deeply as at this moment, and not merely because he had stopped the pain. The old feeling, that at bottom it did not matter whether O'Brien was a friend or an enemy, had come back. O'Brien was a person who could be talked to. Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood. O'Brien had tortured him to the edge of lunacy, and in a little while, it was certain, he would send him to his death. It made no difference. In some sense that went deeper than friendship, they were intimates: somewhere or other, although the actual words might never be spoken, there was a place where they could meet and talk. (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3 ch2)

The behaviour of O'Brien towards Winston parallels the way Party treats the masses like little puppets. Even though they suffer, the power of the Party is so strong that it arouses the devotion it needs, and no matter how much you hate the Party and the conditions it gives you, you always swallow the bait and let them rule you. Naomi Jacobs cites Paul Robinson who

“has argued, [that] the only true eroticism in this novel is the sado-masochistic eroticism of Winston’s relationship to O’Brien”. Winston’s relationship with Julia is not described with such deep feelings as Winston’s relationship and feelings towards O’Brien.

Let us examine O’Brien’s behaviour that led to Winston’s devotion. They met a few times but this one encounter Winston recalls as meeting a man who: “had a certain charm of manner” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1), was well built and a face that commanded respect. It is as if Winston felt a certain attraction to his movements and visage first, he fascinated him and his gestures and appearance made Winston believe he was extremely intelligent and maybe unorthodox and definitely: “a person that you could talk to if somehow you could cheat the telescreen and get him alone” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1). Then there happened to be the first sign Winston thought of an important message from an ally. One O’Brien’s look but coming as if with the feeling of relation and sharing the same hidden aversion: “It was as though their two minds had opened and the thoughts were flowing from one into the other through their eyes” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch1). It was the belief awakened in Winston that he is not alone in thinking bad things about the Party and believing in the secret power of opposition, hopefully waiting in the masses of proles. Also there was the dream that meant a prediction for Winston and he was sure it was O’Brien telling him: “We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness.” Once again, Winston explained that to himself as a sign of something big. Winston was then sure O’Brien would disappear without a trace. When writing his diary, suddenly Winston realised that O’Brien must also be a plotter: “He was writing the diary for O’Brien - to O’Brien: it was like an interminable letter which no one would ever read, but which was addressed to a particular person and took its colour from that fact” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch7). Moreover, Winston felt like writing his notes especially for O’Brien and to him, he thought of him when different issues questioned his logic and later it would be only O’Brien who would have to persuade Winston the other way - the Party-logic way, after Winston expressed what would

have to be changed in his mind to get him thinking illogically. Furthermore, any time Winston thought about revolting, O'Brien always came to his mind and metaphorically, he led him all the way from the "beginning" of Winston's bad ways, he endorsed his steps, caused Winston to develop all his illegal activities and then enjoyed his "remedy". Winston was familiar with this fact of heading towards his own death, and it came a step closer when O'Brien openly invited him into his flat, the lion's den where, later on, Winston was assured of all the rumours he had thought about and was made to articulate all his theories. When he and Julia were listening to O'Brien, not only Winston trusted the conspiracy but O'Brien's figure itself and again his strong gestures and movements mesmerized Winston:

A wave of admiration, almost of worship, flowed out from Winston towards O'Brien. For the moment he had forgotten the shadowy figure of Goldstein. When you looked at O'Brien's powerful shoulders and his blunt-featured face, so ugly and yet so civilized, it was impossible to believe that he could be defeated. There was no stratagem that he was not equal to, no danger that he could not foresee. (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2 ch8)

O'Brien had been so persuasive that Winston even after his arrest hoped somebody would save him. He believed it would be O'Brien who, in spite of warning Winston of getting no help when caught, could arrange some help. During the moments of boredom Winston noticed that the lights never switch off and realised, the place with no darkness might not mean the bright future after the revolution but also the Ministry of Love's prison. Winston while there could hear the same voice like years ago in his dream: "Don't worry, Winston; you are in my keeping. For seven years I have watched over you. Now the turning-point has come. I shall save you, I shall make you perfect" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch2). The most powerful point comes during Winston's suffering and his interaction with O'Brien who is "curing" him. Winston's emotions are not understandable, he is in pain caused by O'Brien but not in his view: "If he could have moved he would have stretched out a hand and laid it on

O'Brien's arm. He had never loved him so deeply as at this moment, and not merely because he had stopped the pain. The old feeling, that at bottom it did not matter whether O'Brien was a friend or an enemy, had come back" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3 ch2). One of the reasons Winston felt this way for O'Brien was that he always knew in advance what Winston only started to think, he had a way to answer his questions and he always understood the meaning of what Winston had said: "The peculiar reverence for O'Brien, which nothing seemed able to destroy, flooded Winston's heart again. How intelligent, he thought, how intelligent! Never did O'Brien fail to understand what was said to him. Anyone else on earth would have answered promptly that he had betrayed Julia" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch3). Even in his dreams Winston could see O'Brien together with other people he loved and the atmosphere was always quiet and merry.

### *3.6 The Past is in the Eye of the Beholder*

History plays an important role in the story. Despite the fact that the record is abused, events in the past have a huge impact on the Party. The past events serve to always promote the Party. And because the past exists only on paper and in the human mind, it is easy to keep it updated. Power is proved by obedience. The Party feels so powerful because they can rule anything. The weather, the maths, the planets, the history. Though this is not happening in the generally accepted reality, it is in people's minds. The cornerstone of the Party's power is their control of the perception of the reality. A person is no longer meant to trust his or her senses, memory or logic - only he or she is obliged to think and repeat what the Party wants.

There are all sorts of data that need to be improved. The war enemy, the chocolate ration or the existence of particular people. There are persons who lived and worked for the Party until they did, see, say or think something undesirable. Such people needed to vanish, all good things ever written about them needed to be changed into negatives or deleted altogether. After that they are no longer spoken of or thought about, as if they never even

appeared on the Earth. Steinhoff calls these actions “continuous present” and comments that “depriving them [citizens] of the knowledge and confidence [is] essential to making comparisons and contrasts, which in turn could lead to rebellion” (150). Another case is creating new heroes of the past that have never actually existed. Such a man is Comrade Ogilvy who needs to replace an untrue article written by Big Brother. Comrade Ogilvy abounds with merits, he is a role model to all men: “At eleven he had denounced his uncle to the Thought Police after overhearing a conversation which appeared to him to have criminal tendencies. At seventeen he had been a district organizer of the Junior Anti-Sex League. At nineteen he had designed a hand-grenade...” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch4). Booker suggests that “Smith describes Ogilvy in terms with clear religious undertones, making him a sort of Communist saint” (*Dystopian Literature* 209). Winston often wonders how people become fooled that easily by what they are told. He thinks about himself as of a man who can see through things and believes in his memory. He does not understand how people accept a fact, a new nonsensical announcement that they take for granted: “It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grammes a week. And only yesterday, he reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be reduced to twenty grammes a week. Was it possible that they could swallow that, after only twenty-four hours? Yes, they swallowed it” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1 ch5).

The citizens are very easy to control even though the Party has not been ruling so long and middle-aged people still could remember the world before. Nevertheless, they seem to have rejected their own memories, deleted the part of brains where they could trust their own experience and now they only work with the part that is still again and again rewritable.

Special care devoted to people who are supposed to disappear. The Party tries to avoid anyone becoming an old-time hero, in the sense of a person fighting for particular rights he or she believes in and being punished for that in front of the eyes of the public. The offender must not leave any memory, one has to be treated carefully according to the established

procedure: “We burn all evil and all illusion out of him; we bring him over to our side, not in appearance, but genuinely, heart and soul. We make him one of ourselves before we kill him. It is intolerable to us that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world, however secret and powerless it may be” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3 ch2). And so they are handled. First they are taken into the prison, nobody knows about them for a certain time, then they are let back but changed, loving Big Brother only and supporting the Party. After a period of time that is different for each individual, a year or thirty, they are killed altogether.

### 3.7 Physical Condition

Appearance and physical condition is a mirror for either the person’s character or the state of mind. It is most obvious when looking at Winston. Throughout the story, Winston never is in a perfect health. It is the age but also the intention of the Party to keep one never completely happy. Jacob says, “the physical discomforts and displeasures are unrelenting: bad smells, bad food, coarse fabric, and ugly surroundings”. But as Winston’s mind is not hurt at the beginning and he hopes for something better and though he is reminded of his health issues, his physical condition is still satisfactory. However there is a huge switch in prison. His hope is disappearing and his previous conviction is undermined and finally when he is already broken his body is compared to the chances of mankind being unable to improve the world. Winston looks dreadful. In front of the mirror he realises his body shows the poor future and what one becomes when turning against the dominion: “The curvature of the spine was astonishing. The thin shoulders were hunched forward so as to make a cavity of the chest, the scraggy neck seemed to be bending double under the weight of the skull. At a guess he would have said that it was the body of a man of sixty, suffering from some malignant disease” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch3). According to Jacobs, Orwell’s body in this state is “inherently flawed, permeable, incapable of sustaining any enduring opposition to social control” and with no hope.

A different example is the character of comrade Parsons. As much as his behaviour is disgusting for Winston, so are his external characteristics. One may feel that Parsons, unlike Winston, is a mirror of the Party. It is dirty, ugly, stinky, fat and other people are afraid of it. You would not want to come near him because of all the unpleasantness it causes. His ingratiating manners and activities can make one fairly annoyed: “Beads of moisture stood out all over his pink face. His powers of sweating were extraordinary. At the Community Centre you could always tell when he had been playing table-tennis by the dampness of the bat handle” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch5).

Julia is a further example. To start with, Winston meets a girl of a lovely figure, she is slim and beautiful but also she is flexible, her body is not as stiff as it seems in the other girls. It embodies her free thinking and her boycott of celibacy. She can pretend to be one like the other Anti-Sex League members but the woman Winston knows is a free-thinker. Whereas the woman Winston meets after their imprisonment looks unattractive, fat and uninviting, as her mind was changed violently, her appearance showed. It could have been also Winston’s perception changed but the fact is - Julia was not attractive any more. Winston compares her body to that of a corpse to be moved: “its rigidity and awkwardness to handle, which made it seem more like stone than flesh. Her body felt like that. It occurred to him that the texture of her skin would be quite different from what it had once been” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p3ch6).

The bodies of minor characters also seem to tell a little story: deductions can be made from physical descriptions. Mrs Parson’s “dust in the creases of her face” (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p1ch2) must make her look older, as Winston considers, she is only thirty but her appearance is saying a higher age. Supposedly she is a tired woman, busy with taking care of the two children, knowing they are watching her and probably they are going to denounce her, she just does not know when it will come and she is also tired because her husband, the loyal comrade is never at home to help her. The dust could also show the life condition of this

family, like of many others, the flat full of broken things, dirt and bad smell.

Then there is O'Brien, the man of elegant gestures and well-built figure that attracts people and promises he is a friendly person and on the other hand there is his face, looking old and tired and not corresponding to the rest.

All of the above bodies are connected to and influenced by the regime. On the contrary, there are the proles who live with their emotions and still have natural instincts: "monstrous woman, solid as a Norman pillar, with brawny red forearms and a sacking apron strapped about her middle" (Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* p2ch4). The woman's body does not reflect the politics nor her low life standard but a person left alone to live, love and remember.



## CONCLUSION

The topic chosen for this thesis may seem a little out-dated to some readers. I think every reader is meant to find his or her own connection and decide whether there is something applicable to our present world and how far we go in comparing both dystopian societies with our own life or whether we read them as fantasies that came into existence for a reason in the past but are now overcome.

For me personally, in both novels there are a lot of ways and hints that cannot pass by unnoticed and it impresses me strongly how these authors writing in the first half of the previous century could have captured worlds that have something to say to so many generations and that have such a wide range of issues relevant to different people living in different time periods.

When we think about it, there are so many facts we can relate to. As for *Brave New World*, especially the personal relationships are problematic, many contemporary people do not like to start any serious bonds and just want to enjoy their lives. I can also understand why Huxley thought up pre-conditioning for particular jobs, as it sometimes happens that an unsuitable person has to work under difficult conditions in a factory and he or she cannot handle it because the person would be meant for another job but under certain circumstances he or she appeared on the wrong place. There are obviously drugs for improving one's mood, not only drugs in the sense of narcotics only but also alcohol, vitamins or all sorts of pills for different purposes. Almost any couple can have a baby even if they are not naturally able to and the modern genetics can not only inform the parents-to-be about their future offspring, it can also trace possible genetic diseases or do a surgery on the fetus. We have new modern games and sports we can play, these are often connected to computers, we do not even have to go out to play tennis, snowboard or ride a horse. Technology can provide so much fun that many people just stay at home but still get the whole world in front of them. Though it is not exactly the same picture that Huxley drew, his thoughts were led also from simple

technological conveniences to more complicated gadgets we do not even have now. This is how I understand his work: it arises from the fear of what is yet to be created for human pleasure. Then there is the matter that Huxley aptly expresses with the hypnopaedical saying: “Ending is better than mending” (*Brave New World*), which seems to be more and more valid as the quality of the products we buy generally decreases and not seldom shoes or clothes are meant to last no more than one season. People are, as much as in Huxley’s, supported to consume goods, services, sports or holidays and I would see this as one of Huxley’s most current issues.

No matter what different points there are in *Nineteen-Eighty Four* and how far the described period seems to be for us, even for present generations there are some topical issues. As the strongest one I see the work of government and mass media. With every new case that comes up on television, on the internet or in the newspaper I always feel how easy it is to influence masses of people. Though we are told not to believe everything we read or hear, nowadays it is extremely difficult to choose the trustworthy media and the credible pieces of information. In Orwell people were constantly misled with different data every day and forced to accept it, today I feel one has no choice. We could even say there are members of Inner and Outer Party, considering the deeds of some famous politicians and the punishment they escape, or money that is meant to be going on in the higher circles, it hugely reminds of the Party. Also, a person nowadays cannot choose to stay unnoticed because with all the social networks and data available on the Internet about everyone it is easy to find a lot of information.

To conclude, the thesis pointed out some important themes from Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, discussed them and tried to support those with the real events, inventions and life conditions. It is apparent that Aldous Huxley was inspired by progress and positive affairs that he turned into development having negative effect on morality and human freedom. However, he remained optimistic and though

he showed his concern he believed there was a way out. Whereas George Orwell was influenced by negative features of his time. Not only by the situation in the Soviet Union, Spanish Civil War or postwar England but also by his personal illness that probably deprived him of all hope for better days for himself as well as for the world. His novel mirrors catastrophic events of his period.

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## RÉSUMÉ IN CZECH

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá dvěma dystopickými pracemi z anglické literatury, románem Konec civilizace Aldouse Huxleyho a Devatenáct set osmdesát čtyři George Orwella. První kapitola vymezuje pojmy utopie, antiutopie a dystopie a snaží se vykreslit historické pozadí doby, ve které díla vznikala a vyzdvihnout takové historické události, které pravděpodobně přispěly k vzniku vizí jednotlivých autorů. Další dvě kapitoly pak jednájí zvlášť s oběma díly, analyzují jejich hlavní myšlenky a diskutují o nich.